

SITUATION REPORT NO. 9
INCIDENT NO. 98-001
DATE: July 21, 1998 TIME: 12:00 p.m.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Devils Lake Basin and eastern North Dakota flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: After peaking at its all-time record high of 1,444.72 feet earlier this month, Devils Lake at Creel Bay has been slowly dropping with the lake level measuring 1,444.63 feet on July 21. The lake crested earlier this summer, on May 29, at 1,444.69 feet. The level of Devils Lake at the beginning of the year measured at 1,442.6 feet MSL. The N.D. State Water Commission (SWC) reports that the volume of water in the lake has increased approximately 220,000 acre-feet this year. Devils Lake has risen over 22 feet since 1993. The volume of the lake has increased from 568,000 acre-feet to over 2 million acre-feet.

Stromme Road, which intersects N.D. Highway 20 south of the city of Devils Lake, breached late July 14-early July 15, resulting in the inundation of nearby agricultural land. Approximately 50 acres have flooded north of Stromme Road. This additional water has begun moving from this area through a 36-inch pipe under N.D. Highway 20 into 40 acres of pastureland west of the highway. The city's permanent dike will halt the water's progress into residential areas. On the west side of N.D. Highway 20, access to three residences has been threatened, and a Ramsey County Rural Utilities lift station that serves Acorn Ridge residents is at risk of inundation. An emergency contract to raise the lift station has been awarded. Ottertail Power has secured its utilities in this area. The Ramsey County Emergency Manager is working with North Dakota Emergency Management to resolve the access problem for the three individuals. Homes located alongside the road had been relocated through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Ramsey County officials are concerned that N.D. Highway 20 could also breach south of Acorn Ridge, just north of Camp Gilbert C. Grafton. Homes, roads, utilities and camp facilities would be inundated. Homes are well below the lake level, according to the Ramsey County Emergency Manager.

Wind storms in late June and early July caused considerable damage to shoulders on Devils Lake area highways when waves exceeded the height of rip-rap protection, the N.D. Department of Transportation reports. The Highway Patrol closed N.D. Highway 19 on July 3 after winds in excess of 65 miles per hour made traveling unsafe.

In Nelson County, sewer problems have been reported in the Klotten area. Individuals in other parts of the county also report basement seepage problems.

North Dakota National Guard officials at Camp Gilbert C. Grafton have reported that Devils Lake waters are causing significant erosion on the south and southwest shorelines of the camp.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: A representative of Lutheran Disaster Response met with area ministers in Towner and Rolette Counties concerned about the impact of disastrous conditions on farming operations and their parishioners. The representative plans to meet with ministers in Cavalier County during the week of July 19-25. Lutheran Disaster Response staff has been receiving stress-related calls from farmers seeking assistance.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS:

FEMA-1220-DR-ND

President Clinton on July 20 amended FEMA-1220-DR-ND, a Major Presidential Disaster Declaration for flooding North Dakota. His amendment expands the incident type to include severe storms. This amendment was based on an earlier request by Maj. General Keith D. Bjerke, the State Coordinating Officer to amend the incident type because of heavy rainfall, high water table, hail storms and high winds that have compounded flooding problems in the 13 declared North Dakota counties and two Indian reservations.

The Cass County Commission has issued a disaster declaration. An assessment by county officials indicates that excessive precipitation has resulted in nearly \$2 million in damages to public infrastructure. North Dakota Emergency Management sent a request on July 20 to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for a Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) in Cass County. A PDA for Individual Assistance was scheduled to be conducted on July 21, and a PDA for Public Assistance was set for July 22. A Major Presidential Disaster Declaration has been declared for 13 North Dakota counties and two Indian reservations as a result of spring flooding and excessive precipitation on lands already saturated by six years of disastrous flooding.

Devils Lake State Flood Coordination Center

A State Flood Coordination Center meeting was held in Devils Lake on July 16. Following are summaries of agency reports submitted during the meeting:

Ramsey County Emergency Management

The Ramsey County Emergency Manager plans to ask NFIP to reconsider its decision that homes located along Military Road were not eligible under the 1998 waiver. The NFIP administrator granted a waiver for 1998 for Devils Lake area shoreline structures at 1,444 to 1,445.5 feet in elevation. The waiver suspends a policy provision calling for 90 days of continuous inundation as a condition for considering property as a total loss. The new waiver requires property owner to buy back the salvage and to move the building to a new location that is at an elevation of 1,460 feet or higher. The waiver went into effect April 30 and is for claims filed on or before September 30. Property owners are required to have purchased insurance by March 1.

Nelson County Emergency Management

The Nelson County Emergency Manager recently met with representatives of the North Dakota National Guard to discuss plans to elevate Nelson County Highway 27. The road, which is the dividing line between Nelson and Ramsey Counties, has been inundated since 1994. The National Guard has been asked to review the possibility of participating in the grade raise as a community project.

The Nelson County Commission had made a formal motion to request opening of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands for haying and grazing. Livestock producers have been unable to utilize the hay that they had previously stored. Recent heavy rainfalls in northern Nelson County have spoiled this hay.

Nelson County officials have also asked that the N.D. Department of Transportation to open the "no-mow" areas along N.D. Highway 2.

Representatives of Hamlin and Central Townships report a growing recurrence of road problems in a wildlife management area. A high water table and precipitation have resulted in water threatening roads in the area. The county water board and townships are discussing a de-watering project to drain one to two feet of water from the area into the McVillie Dam. A ditch used to drain the water would be plugged at the project's end.

The Nelson County Water Board met on July 16 with the State Water Commission to discuss downsizing plans for a de-watering project for Lake Loretta. The lake keeps rising, threatening to form one body of water with McHugh's Slough. County officials are concerned that increasing lake levels will pose a threat to the city of Michigan.

City of Minnewaukan

The city of Minnewaukan has been working with North Central Planning Council to construct a temporary dike to protect the city from Devils Lake flood waters. The dike measures approximately four feet high and is 15 feet wide and will extend for nearly the length of one city block. The dike is located at the northeast side of town and runs along the south side of a coulee, west of U.S. Highway 281.

City officials will be working through Benson County Emergency Management to obtain a six-inch portable pump. The pump will be used to pump water over the temporary dike into the coulee, which leads to Devils Lake.

Spirit Lake Tribe

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is helping Spirit Lake Tribe assess the potential for emergency assistance and repairs of levee systems on tribal land. Tribal officials are concerned that a potential rupturing of dikes in the St. Michael area could result in the loss of public land and private property, as well as the inundation of N.D. Highway 20. The Spirit Lake Emergency Manager expects the Tribal Council to pass an assurance agreement for dike work.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is conducting major road repairs to BIA roads. Crews are adding a four-inch top to roads since these roadways are being used more heavily as a result of the closure of N.D. Highway 57.

State and federal Public Assistance inspectors will be examining sewer lines near Fort Totten's West Acres that are in need of repair. Inspectors have completed inspections of flood-damaged roads on the reservation.

Spirit Lake Tribe has moved 21 Housing Improvement Program (HIP) manufactured homes and 17 tribal manufactured homes. Road construction has slowed the process of delivering these homes to flood victims. Tribal officials are hoping to have at least one half of the homes set up or at least delivered to the recipients by July's end.

The Spirit Lake Emergency Manager has been working FEMA, BIA, the USACE and tribal entities to formulate a plan to determine which roads will be protected if Devils Lake continues to rise.

N.D. State Water Commission (SWC)

The SWC's Available Storage Acreage Program (ASAP) is essentially complete for 1998. Because of the program, over 21,000 acre-feet of water remained out of Devils Lake in 1998.

The SWC is still considering the possibility of excavating the channel to Stump Lake. Excavating the channel could remove approximately 410,000 acre-feet of water from Devils Lake while raising Stump Lake approximately 40 feet. Landowner agreements must be obtained, and impacts that the project would have on the Stump Lake National Wildlife Refuge, along with other environmental concerns, have to be determined before any excavation is started.

The SWC will soon be releasing a newsletter discussing water management efforts within the Devils Lake Basin. The newsletter will be sent to agencies and individuals on the SWC mailing list.

North Dakota Department of Transportation

After several delays due to various problems, the contractor for the N.D. Highway 57 grade raise at the Narrows is now working a full schedule of two 10-hour shifts per day. Borrow material is being truck-hauled to the north end of the project and scraper-hauled to the south end. Crews are moving approximately 18,000 tons of dirt per shift.

Paving of the grade raises on U.S. Highway 281 in the Minnewaukan area has been completed. The paving contractor also has done a good portion of the paving on N.D. Highway 19 between U.S. Highway 281 and the city of Devils Lake, but is now waiting for a subcontractor to finish hauling additional aggregate base material and mining the east half of this segment. In the interim period, paving work is being done on the Grahams Island Road and BIA routes on the Spirit Lake Nation. Paving work on N.D. Highway 19 is expected to resume on about August 1, but may be held up due to an additional grade raise to be finished at the Mauvais Coulee crossing. The highway will be raised to 1,448.5 feet MSL.

The contractor is also continuing to work on a grade raise at Ft. Totten Bay on N.D. Highway 57. A change order has been approved to raise the Ft. Totten Bay crossing up to about 1,451 feet in order to stabilize the grade and get additional life from this raise. This work should be finished rather rapidly and the highway reopened to travel by late summer.

A contractor has been working on a project to raise the wind-damaged rip-rap sections on N.D. Highway 20 at the Narrows and Camp Grafton area. This work is nearing completion. Contracts for repairs on N.D. Highway 19 and U.S. Highway 281 are still needed.

Bids were scheduled to be accepted on July 17 for the new bridge and grade raise at the south Mauvais Coulee crossing on U.S. Highway 281. This project is supposed to be completed before winter.

In the last month, using both contractor's forces and N.D. Department of Transportation (DOT) maintenance personnel, the gravel sections on N.D. Highway 20 at the Narrows and Camp Grafton were finally waterproofed with applications of liquid asphalt. Due to construction traffic and exceedingly heavy general traffic, however, the surface then broke down in many areas, forcing department maintenance personnel to spend many hours repairing the surface. Although the surface is now for the most part continuously waterproofed, problems continue to persist due to heavy equipment traffic and bleeding caused by hot weather conditions. Plans are now being discussed on how to best get these segments in satisfactory condition for the winter months following suspension of construction work for the season. It will be a priority issue with the Devils Lake District Office to ensure area highways are in better driving condition than they were in last winter, although the success of these plans will depend largely on what kind of weather conditions we have in late fall.

North Dakota Highway Patrol

The North Dakota Highway Patrol has received complaints that contractors are crossing the lanes to avoid potholes. Troopers have discussed this safety concern with contractors.

North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department

The current lake elevation has required temporary relocation of the maintenance facility at Shelters Grove. The building will be relocated to a permanent site this fall. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) has issued payment for this building. A section of the campground entrance road has been raised to provide access to the modern campground. Access to half of the day-use area and maintenance area has been lost. Approximately 300 feet of paved road has been flooded. A temporary road to the maintenance facility has been cleared. Most of our parking area for the picnic shelter has been lost. Estimated losses at Shelters Grove amount to \$300,000.

At Grahams Island, one comfort station has been relocated to a temporary site, and the State Parks and Recreation Staff is awaiting approval of its NFIP claim for the building. Devils Lake waters have flooded the septic system and lift station for the comfort station. The harbor lift station has been flooded and abandoned. Until repairs can be made to the lift station, septic systems using the harbor lift station are being pumped by Parks and Recreation staff, and the effluent is being hauled to the waste water treatment ponds. Water lines in the campground have been capped and rerouted to provide water service to the campsites. Electrical service has been re-established to all of the remaining electrical campsites. Estimated losses from the 1998 flood, including relocation of the comfort station, are \$175,000.

Also at Grahams Island, a contractor is replacing the boat ramp and parking area in a new location. Projected completion is August 1. Plans are being prepared to relocate one lift station, electrical campsites, a comfort station and the assistant manager's residence. Relocation of the residence will allow the Parks and Recreation staff to provide day-use areas along the lakeshore.

At Black Tiger Bay, higher lake levels have caused erosion at the boat ramp and loss of the parking area. Additional rip-rap has been placed, and a parking area for vehicles and boat trailers has been constructed. Estimated costs for repairing flood damages totals \$17,000.

North Central Planning Council

North Central Planning Council (NCPC) has received 16 applications for its Benson/Ramsey Urgent Needs Temporary Diking Program. Of the \$93,000 in available funds, \$37,000 remains available for new applications. Under the program, a landowner pays one dollar for every two dollars in grant money up to a maximum amount of \$2,000. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) helps fund this program.

The NCPC has also provided funding for two other diking projects through the Urgent Needs Temporary Diking Program. NCPC allocated \$15,000 to help with flood-damage repair work to the Stephen Dike on the Spirit Lake Tribe. Approximately \$30,000 in funds will be used to help the city of Minnewaukan with its temporary dike.

Work has not yet begun on a project to provide emergency utility services to Mercy Hospital in Devils Lake. The project calls for establishing a system to provide emergency water and sewer systems for the hospital in the event of a disaster. Work entails hooking the hospital up to the Ramsey County Rural Utilities system and constructing an emergency sewer system. The NCPC recently completed work on an environmental review for the project that is estimated to cost \$123,000. The project will receive 80 percent in supplemental CDBG funds.

Contracts for work for a water line to equalize pressure at the Cliffs Subdivision in east Devils Lake have been awarded. Water pressure problems developed when lakeshore homes were relocated under NFIP to the Cliffs Subdivision. Work has not yet begun on the \$25,000 project.

On June 18, the U.S. Congress authorized \$250,000 in additional funds to help with flood-fight efforts to protect the Ramsey County Rural Utilities system. Congress previously authorized \$600,000. Crews are repairing and rerouting flood-threatened sewer lines.

Indian Health Service

The Indian Health Service (IHS) will be providing water and sewer service for 25 manufactured home designated for flood victims. These homes are being served through the Housing Improvement

Program (HIP), which placed 10 footings in preparation of relocation efforts. Spirit Lake Tribe obtained 85 manufactured homes that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) located in North Dakota as part of 1997 spring flood recovery efforts.

Spirit Lake Tribe plans to use \$200,000 of loan funds (from the canceled Air Force housing project) to assist with serving the manufactured homes provided by FEMA. Specific tribal plans have not been completed. However, two homeowners have moved and set up the manufactured homes at their own expense.

An IHS project has been initiated to provide access to the flood-impacted sewer system facilities for Fort Totten and St. Michael. The land surveying has been completed, and the access design will now begin.

IHS has received two requests from the Spirit Lake Tribe, including one for additional emergency funds to provide water and sewer services to the remaining portion of the FEMA housing units. The Tribe has also requested that IHS perform an examination of the flood effects on the sanitation facilities at St. Michael.

The Tribe is considering placing a portion of the FEMA homes at a trailer court located in Fort Totten. An evaluation of the site will be conducted because of the drainage problem affecting a portion of the site. Water and sewer facilities also may need repair or replacement.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

Work began July 6 on efforts to raise the top of the lake level protection system for Devils Lake to 1452 feet. The level of protection recently was increased to a top-of-levee elevation of 1,450 feet. Levee construction is being conducted in increments. A third increment would raise the top-of-levee elevation of 1,457 feet. This increment is under review for possible implementation starting this coming fall. This raise has been endorsed by the State of North Dakota, Ramsey County and the city of Devils Lake, and is currently under consideration by the USACE. A recent estimate for the project places its cost at \$41 million, \$9 million less than original projections. In other levee work, three of the five pumping stations have been constructed. Contracts for the remaining two, the East Ditch and the Eagle Bend stations, have been awarded to a Minneapolis firm.

The USACE has distributed copies of the draft Scoping Document for the Environmental Impact Statement for construction of an outlet for Devils Lake. Comments on the document will be received until August 28. Approximately \$5 million in federal funds has been designated for construction of an outlet from Devils Lake to the Sheyenne River, subject, in part, to completion of the economic and environmental analyses. The analyses are scheduled to be presented to the U.S. Congress by late 1998 or early 1999. Approximately two-thirds of the landowners affected by plans for the outlet signed rights-of-entry agreements, necessary to obtaining engineering data for the design of the pipeline and pump station. The remaining rights-of-entry were granted through a court order issued on June 12. The initial phase of the fieldwork for the cultural resources survey was conducted during June 15 to 30, and the soil and surface boring began June 22 and will continue through July.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No change from previous reports.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: No change from previous reports.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director